

ST. GERMANS RURAL SANITARY AUTHORITY.

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A N N U A L     R E P O R T

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Medical Officer of Health.

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To

The Chairman and Members of the

St. Germans Rural Sanitary Authority.

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Gentlemen,

It is again my duty to submit to you my Annual Report as to the health and Sanitary Condition of the Union during the past twelve months.

The district has an area of 41,712 acres, and the population on the Census of 1891 was 15030 on which all the statistical tables are drawn up.

During the year, 1896, the number of births registered in the whole district was 419, being a rate 27.7 per thousand.

The total number of deaths from all causes was 203, making a rate of 13.7 per thousand as against 14.7 in 1895, and 17.10 in 1894. Forty-four of these were among children under one year of age, which gives a death rate of 2.9 per thousand of the population; being much the same as the preceding year - and seventy-two were sixty-five and upwards.

Eighteen deaths were recorded as being due to Zymotic diseases, - a slight increase on the preceding year in consequence of a lengthened epidemic of measles.

They were:-

- 1 from diphtheria
- 11 from measles.
- 3 from whooping cough
- 4 from diarrhoea;

distinctly isolated cases, two occurring in August, one being in the North division aged two months, and one in the South,





aged eighteen months, one in September, in the North division, aged sixty-nine and one in the St. Germans division, in December, aged four months; which makes the death rate from zymotic diseases 1.1 per thousand.

Eighteen deaths have occurred from cancer, being a considerable increase on the last year.

Fifty-eight cases of infectious diseases were notified during the year, being half the number of the year preceding, viz:-

- 12 from Diphtheria
- 3 from Typhoid fever.
- 20 from Scarlet fever
- 1 from Puerperal fever.
- 10 from Erysipelas;

making a rate of 3.8 per thousand of the population.

Three hundred and fifty eight children were successfully vaccinated during the year, twenty four only of over six months old being returned as unvaccinated, and thirty three being accounted for by death - removals and postponements on account of illness.

In the St. Germans division, 61 births were registered and 33 deaths, showing a birth-rate of 21.8 and a death rate of 11.4 per thousand respectively as against 25.7 and 13.5 in 1895.

Of these, 3 deaths only occurred under one year old making a death rate of 1.04 per thousand, and 10 at the age of sixty-five and upwards.

Two deaths were recorded as being due to Zymotic disease, viz:- one from Measles and one from Diarrhoea, making the Zymotic death rate .6 per thousand.

There were twenty five cases notified, which makes a rate of 8.6 per thousand, viz:-

- 6 cases of Erysipelas
- 12 cases of Scarlet fever
- 1 case of Puerperal fever.

The first week in May, Scarlet fever broke out in St. Germans rapidly spreading through the village and to one family





in Polbathick where the children attended the St. Germans Schools which were closed for a month in consequence. An isolated case occurred at Tideford in June, and in July it again broke out in a family at Trerule Foot, but was there restricted to the one household. And in November another isolated case at Cuterew Hill.

In consequence of the outbreak of Scarlet Fever in May, the District Council on my recommendation distributed leaflets of directions concerning infectious diseases, which were drawn up by me, to every householder in the Union.

During the last week in September an epidemic of measles began at Harkurs, extending rapidly among the children attending the National School at Livioch, on account of which it was considered necessary to close that school for a month. From there it spread to Henssonford where the school was closed from November 10th to December 14th; thence to St. Germans and Polbathick where about seventy cases occurred necessitating the closure of both the boys and girls schools from November 14th to December 31st.

The cottages on the Quay road, St. Germans, which have been for so long without water, have at length been supplied from a good source, both as regards quality and quantity.

A scarcity of water occurred in the upper part of Tideford during the Summer; the well was consequently enlarged, which it is hoped will prevent any future trouble.

A cess-pool on the east side of the road continues to be a nuisance in hot dry weather to remedy which it will be necessary to extend the drainage to the top of the village.

There is still deficient closet accommodation for some of the cottages.

In Back Lane, Polbathick, there is an insufficient supply of water eight families being dependent for their supply





on a very shallow well which was for some time during the past summer dry, when the people depended on the kindness of a neighbour for their supply of drinking water or had to fetch it from some distance. This demands your attention before another summer.

The supply of water to two cottages at Trevennis requires immediate attention as at present the only supply is from a shallow pool by the road side which is constantly liable to pollution.

The drainage and water supply of Lowderry should be hastened and carried out before the coming summer.

The farm cottages at Trevickie have been provided with closet accommodation by the Landlord.

At Craithole the water from the old well is now raised by a pump to the village which is a considerable benefit and convenience to the inhabitants.

In the South division 344 births were registered, giving a birth rate of 29.8 per thousand, and 131 deaths giving a rate of 16.02 per thousand as against 14.4 per thousand in the year preceding. Of these, thirty were under one year of age, giving a death rate of 3.6 per thousand,-- the causes of death being 5 from convulsions, 3 from bronchitis and pneumonia, 1 from whooping cough, 2 from measles, 1 from influenza, 1 found strangled, 3 from premature birth, and 9 from debility.

Twenty-four deaths occurred at the age of seventy-five and upwards.

Eleven deaths were recorded as due to Zymotic diseases, viz:-

- 3 from Measles.
- 2 from Whooping cough
- 1 from Diarrhoea;

Making the death rate from these causes 1.3 per thousand.

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There were twenty-seven cases notified, viz:-

3	from diphtheria
7	from Scarlet fever
3	from Typhoid fever
9	from Trysipelas,

making a disease rate of 3.3 per thousand.

Of these, five of the cases of diphtheria occurred in Torpoint from the beginning of January to the beginning of April; one in July at Kingsand, evidently an imported case; one in September in Antony Village; and one in December at a farm in St. Johns.

Of the cases of Scarlet Fever, four occurred at Torpoint, one at Millbrook, and two isolated cases in the parish of Maker.

The three cases of Typhoid Fever were in the neighbourhood of Millbrook, viz:- one in the village, one at South down, and one at Anderton, the latter one being traced to polluted water. The well was at once closed and a supply of water has since been laid on from Millbrook.

Measles have been very prevalent during the last three months of the year on account of which the Infant School at Torpoint was closed from October 6th to November 2nd, and the School at Antony from November 24th to the Christmas holidays.

During the Summer and Autumn there was a scarcity of water at Torpoint necessitating the use of an engine for pumping water into the storage reservoir for providing a sufficient supply for the inhabitants.

On July 30th an enquiry was held by Col. Inard, R.E., Local Government Board Inspector, with regard to a loan for remedying the defects in the storage reservoirs.

On March 18th, I inspected a house in Terry Street, condemning it in its present condition as being unfit for habitation, but up to a recent date I found it was still occupied and without any material alteration.





The portion of the sewer between the bottom of Lobbs Mill and the outlet has often times become choked by old pieces of cloth, etc, lodging in it on account of its being so flat, and requiring the obstruction to be removed by a long piece of wire. This should receive the attention of the Authority, and any defects remedied and if possible the gradient increased to prevent any further possibility of its becoming choked and causing a nuisance injurious to the health of the neighbourhood.

In July, my attention was called to the landing of town soil on the beach at Wilcove within a few yards of houses which I considered injurious to the health of the inhabitants and recommended the prohibition of landing it so near the dwellings.

At Carbeal Mill a similar complaint was made which I considered without just cause, but found the drain from the closet was discharged on to the mud above ordinary high water mark. This I suggested should be extended to beyond low water mark.

The school room at Antony was insufficiently ventilated and the closets opened into the cloak room causing obnoxious smells. On calling the Managers attention to it, he agreed to have it remedied without delay and have the closets distinct from the school building.

The burial ground for the parish is becoming very full and requires enlarging or a new cemetery supplied for Torpoint, and that portion of the parish. This question is, I believe, under consideration but no time should be lost in carrying it into effect.

A case of overcrowding occurred in a cottage at Lower Tregantle consisting of two rooms in which were eight persons. Notice was duly served and complied with.





In the beginning of the year I was requested to inspect Millbrook and report on its sanitary condition more especially with regard to the pigs kept on the north side of West Street.

This I did on February 1st accompanied by the Sanitary Inspector and found a number of pigs were kept mostly in small close styces; some were as clean as pigs can be while others were in a most filthy condition, and as the distance between the houses in West Street and St. Andrew's Street ranges from about thirty to forty yards I was of opinion that in such a thickly populated part of the village, keeping pigs should be prohibited, there not being sufficient space to allow them to be kept without becoming a nuisance to the inhabitants in one or other of the streets.

There were some old dilapidated privies in the gardens which ought to be converted into water closets and connected with the sewer which is within a few yards.

Two of the slaughter houses were dirty and unwholesome, the skins of animals allowed to lie about and were very offensive.

One of these was not paved, consequently the blood and offal could not be washed away. The walls were not lime washed and under the same roof animals and fowls were kept. I recommended the extension of our bye-laws to every parish in the district and the compulsion of licensing all the slaughter houses.

A well at the higher end of West having been closed and the lane leading to it being of no service, it was becoming a place for the committal of nuisance. This has since then been closed.

The water had not been laid on to Ledbrocke which I advised to be done without delay as the supply in use was liable to pollution.

There is still a plentiful supply of water though the reservoir is defective.





The sewerage is on the whole satisfactory evidence of which is the very marked diminution of typhoid fever in the village. In August I reported a nuisance existing at Feruley Cottage Kingsand, caused by the drain from the water closet of the adjoining house passing under the floor of one of the rooms being defective, notice was served on the owners of the respective houses to abate the nuisance, which was not at the time attended to, but was ultimately settled by arbitration on October 8th. Since which the necessary alterations have been carried out.

In the Spring the drains in Endsleigh Place were defective allowing the escape of water when poured down the closet and the closet was insufficiently ventilated. This was attended to by the Owner of the property and the drains were afterwards tested by the Sanitary Inspector who found them perfect. In October a further complaint was made by the occupier and when inspected by the Sanitary Inspector he found the water closet had not been used since the Spring, the cover being fastened down, on opening which he found the water in the pan which formed the seat had evaporated, allowing a free escape of sewer gas into the house. A supply of water and ventilation soon remedied the noxious smell. Since then an experienced registered plumber has been consulted and could find no defects existing.

On visiting the village in October, I found the work of putting down new curbs and gutters in Pere Street in progress, but was informed that it was not intended to lay a new sewer then. As the old one was in a most dilapidated and unsanitary condition I urged the necessity of attending to this at once while the roadway was torn up. The Sanitary Authority at once acceded to my advice and carried out the work. The





extension of the sewer to the head of the village is to be proceeded with, having a ventilating shaft and flushing tank at the extreme end. On inspecting the source of the water supply, I found a loose dry built tank for the reception of liquid sewage from the barracks at Maker in dangerous proximity to the reservoir, the soakage from which must in course of time pollute the water. This should receive attention before any pollution takes place.

In the North division 114 births were registered and 44 deaths making a birth rate of 28.3 per thousand and a death rate of 10.9 per thousand as against 16.14 in the preceding year.

Of these 11 were under one year of age, viz:- 4 from premature birth, 3 from asthenia, 1 from bronchitis, 1 from convulsions, 1 from Jaundice and 1 from diarrhoea which makes the death rate under one year old 2.7 per thousand.

15 were at sixty five of age and upwards.

Five deaths were recorded as being due to Zymotic diseases, viz:-  
1 from diphtheria  
2 from whooping cough  
2 from diarrhoea

making the Zymotic death rate 1.2 per thousand very much the same as the last year.

There were six cases of infectious disease notified, viz:-  
4 from Diphtheria  
1 from Scarlet fever  
1 from Erysipelas,  
making a rate of 1.4 per thousand.

Of the four cases of diphtheria, three occurred at Paynters Cross and one at Quethiock; and the case of Scarlet fever at Saunton in St. Mellion parish.

In April I accompanied by the Sanitary Inspector, inspected a house over the blacksmith's shop at Botus-fleming consisting of two habitable rooms and one lumber room, but with no closet or any accommodation for the removal of house refuse.





or slop water excepting in a very small garden too near the house to be sanitary, and the water supply was at some distance from the house. With the necessary closet accommodation it would be habitable for a small family but without such convenience it cannot be said to be so.

Just opposite the window of the living room is the drainage from a farm yard emptying on to the highway. This should be at once removed. The privy of the farm cottage was directly above and about twenty feet from the well which I recommended should be removed, the old pit thoroughly cleared out filled up with lime and earth and a pail closet substituted.

Some new buildings being in course of erection at Landrake, I have recommended the continuance of the sewerage to Easton Cottages which will I hope soon be carried into effect.

In consequence of an outbreak of measles in St. Stephens parish the Board schools were closed from October 12th to November 16th and during that time the buildings were lime-washed and scrubbed with carbolic water. The boys school at Lantlands was opened a week earlier, care being taken to exclude any children from infected houses.

Two houses having been built at Carknot which required an independent water supply, the water from the well sunk for their use was submitted for analysis to the County Analyst who found it contained no metallic impurity as was suspected and though not a clean sample, he considered that with slight filtration it would be a fairly good water and did not feel justified to condemn it even as it was, and as the surroundings of the well were free from any source of contamination the necessary certificate was granted and since then a pump has been fixed.

The village of Carknot is supplied from a dipping well





which is a good and abundant supply. I would recommend that the well be properly enclosed and a pump fixed.

The drainage and water supply of Furraton is now, I am pleased to say, receiving the attention of the Authority and will I hope be carried into effect without further delay, but I would urge them to pause in adopting any new system until a searching enquiry and thorough investigation has been made as to its efficacy.

The remaining portions of my district do not at present require any special notice.

Six samples of water have been analysed, three by myself, three by the County analyst, one of which viz: "from a well at Anderton" was condemned as being unsafe for drinking or domestic purposes, in consequence of which the well was closed.

I wish again to call your attention to the bye-laws not dealing with nuisances in the parish of Landulph, and only dealing with slaughter houses in the parishes of Water and Landrake with St. Erney and furthermore that in the clauses relating to the removal of house refuse the contributory place of Gaysand is excluded.

In conclusion, I consider it is very satisfactory to note the continued decrease of typhoid fever in the district only three cases having been notified during the year without a death as against eleven cases in 1895 and two deaths; also the marked diminution of the cases of diphtheria, viz: twelve with only one death as against seventy cases and four deaths in the preceding year, which is good evidence of the improved sanitary condition of the district.

I remain, Gentlemen,  
Your obedient servant,

J. THORP WYLLI,  
Medical Officer of  
Health.

St. Germans.  
January 1897.





# ST. GERMANS

## RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

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### Directions Concerning Infectious Diseases.

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#### GROUP I.

**Measles, Scarlet Fever, and Small-pox** are diseases which are conveyed to others from a previous case, first by direct contact, second by indirect contact, as by clothes, food, receptacles, books, toys, door handles, &c.

In **Scarlet Fever**, milk frequently becomes a source of infection.

Precautions to be observed :—Patients should be at once isolated as far as circumstances will permit.

In cases of **Small-pox** vaccination or re-vaccination of all in the house should be at once insisted on.

All bed linen and clothes should be washed separately with carbolic soap after being soaked for some hours in a disinfecting solution, and then exposed in the open air for twenty-four hours.

**Convalescents** should be washed all over every night with hot water and carbolic soap, and should wash their hands with carbolic soap at least twice a day.

The periods during which patients are capable of conveying infection to others are—

**Measles**, about three weeks ; **Scarlet Fever**, about six weeks ; **Small-pox**, about four weeks after the rash has disappeared, or until all peeling has ceased.

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#### GROUP II.

**Typhoid Fever and Cholera** are conveyed to healthy persons by drinking impure water into which Typhoid or Cholera germs have found their way, also by water polluted with sewage, and by food or using food utensils which have been washed or contaminated by impure water.

**Precautions.**—Isolate the patient, and in times of epidemic boil all water and milk before use.

**Note.**—In Typhoid Fever and Cholera the infection is conveyed to others through the stools of the patient, which are highly infective and should always be thoroughly disinfected, and afterwards if possible, destroyed by fire.

All soiled linen and bedding should be disinfected as recommended in Group I.

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#### GROUP III.

**Diphtheria and Whooping Cough.**—**Diphtheria** is usually conveyed to healthy persons by inhaling the breath or handling the discharge from the throat of an infected person.

From domestic animals (cats, pigeons, fowls), suffering from a throat affection of a diphtherial nature.

It may also arise from foul and offensive drains, or from decomposed animal matter.

**Precautions.**—All discharges from the nose and throat should be wiped away with rags and immediately burnt. Cups, spoons, &c., should be carefully cleansed in boiling water.

Isolation of the patient as far as practicable should be strictly enforced.

**Infection** is capable of being conveyed to others throughout the illness and for at least 14 days after the disappearance of all membrane.

**Whooping Cough** is conveyed to healthy persons through the breath, or from the discharges spat up or vomited.

There is danger of **infection as long as there is any cough.**

**Precautions.**—Isolate the patient as far as practicable. Disinfect all discharges. Avoid kissing or inhaling the breath of an infected person.

**In case of an outbreak of any of the above infectious diseases.**—Keep the patient warm in bed. Inform your medical attendant without delay. Do not send any child from an infected house to school, or allow them to mingle with other children.

**Disinfectants** may be obtained free, when required, from the **Medical Officer of Health** or the **Sanitary Inspector.**

**Legal penalties**, which will, in future, be strictly enforced in the cases of those persons who neglect to carry out the above directions.

**Infectious Diseases Notification Act, 1889, Section 3.**

(a) The head of the family who neglects to send notice of any of the above infectious diseases that may occur, to the Medical Officer of Health of the district, is liable, on summary conviction, to a penalty not exceeding Forty Shillings.

**Public Health Act, 1875, Section 126** provides that any Person who—

- (1) While suffering from any **Dangerous Infectious Disorder** wilfully exposes himself without proper precautions against spreading the same disorder in any **Street, Public Place, Shop, Inn, or Public Conveyance**, or enters any Public Conveyance without previously notifying to the Owner, Conductor, or Driver, that he is so suffering; or—
- (2) Being in charge of any Person so suffering, so exposes such sufferer, or—
- (3) Gives, lends, sells, transmits, or exposes, without previous disinfection, any bedding, clothing, rags, or other things which have been exposed to infection from any such disorder **shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding Five Pounds.**

Section 128—Any Person who knowingly lets for hire any house, room, or part of a house in which any Person has been suffering from any dangerous infectious disorder without having such house, room, or part of a house, and all articles therein liable to retain infection, disinfected to the satisfaction of a legally qualified Medical Practitioner, as testified by a certificate signed by him, **shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding Twenty Pounds.**

**J. BEDFORD KERSWILL,**

*Medical Officer of Health.*